

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A process for producing an aromatic compound by Friedel-Crafts reaction, which comprises reacting an aromatic compound having at least one hydrogen atom attached directly to the aromatic group with an ester compound in the presence of a heteropolyacid-containing solid acid catalyst, wherein the aromatic compound by Friedel-Crafts reaction comprises aromatic ketones, aromatic carboxylic acids, aromatic alcohols, or alkylated or alkenylated aromatics.

2. (original): The process according to claim 1, wherein the heteropolyacid-containing solid acid catalyst is a solid acid catalyst comprising a carrier and a heteropolyacid carried on the carrier.

3. (previously presented): The process according to claim 1, wherein a central atom of the heteropolyacid is selected from the group consisting of P, Si, B, Ge and As and a coordinating atom comprises at least one of Mo and W.

4. (previously presented): The process according to claim 1, wherein a central atom of the heteropolyacid is selected from the group consisting of Si and Ge and a coordinating atom comprises at least one of Mo and W.

5. (original): The process product according to claim 1, wherein an amount of the heteropolyacid carried in the heteropolyacid-containing solid acid catalyst is 50% by weight or less.

6. (original): The process according to claim 1, wherein an amount of the heteropolyacid carried in the heteropolyacid-containing solid acid catalyst is 30% by weight or less.

7. (original): The process according to claim 2, wherein a relative surface area of the carrier supporting the heteropolyacid is 20 m²/g or more.

8. (original): The process according to claim 2, wherein the carrier carrying the heteropolyacid has a purity of 98% or higher.

9. (original): The process according to claim 1, wherein the ester compound comprises lactones.

10. (canceled).
11. (currently amended): The process according to claim ~~10~~ 1, wherein the aromatic compound by Friedel-Crafts reaction is aromatic ketones or aromatic carboxylic acids.
12. (original): The process according to claim 11, wherein the aromatic compound by Friedel-Crafts is aromatic ketones.
13. (original): The process according to claim 1, wherein the Friedel-Crafts reaction product is cyclized ketones.
14. (currently amended): The process according to claim 1, further comprising the step of reusing the heteropolyacid-containing solid acid catalyst after separating and recovering it.
15. (original): The process according to claim 14, wherein the catalyst is regenerated in the step of reusing the heteropolyacid-containing solid acid catalyst after separating and recovering it.
16. (canceled).